



Fire Update

Meadow Fire

Nez Perce
National Forest

September 12, 2006 9:00 am

Internet Address: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>

or: <http://www.inciweb.org>

For Fire Information Phone: (208) 842-9225 open 8 am to 9 pm

For Immediate Release

Fire Facts

The Meadow Fire is managed by Doug Turman's Northern Rockies Incident Management Team.

Date Started: September 3, 2006 **Cause of Ignition:** lightning **Location:** Red River, Idaho

Size: 6,600 acres **Percent Contained:** 10% **Estimated Time of Containment:** Unknown

Number of Personnel: 199 **Equipment:** 1 feller buncher, 1 dozer, 1 skidgine, 6 engines, 3 water tenders, 2 excavators, 1 brush cutter

Aircraft: Shared air resources with the Nez Perce NF and other surrounding large fires

20-person crews: 5, including 2 Hotshot crews

Cost to date: \$777,000 **Injuries Today:** 0

Cooperators: Idaho County Sheriff's Department, Idaho County Emergency Management Services, Nez Perce National Forest

Fire Activity on the Meadow Fire Increases

Red River, Idaho –Fire activity increased on Monday as a warmer, dryer weather pattern influenced fire behavior. Smoke and visible fire activity was much more evident. Increased burning activity is expected to continue on Tuesday as temperatures remain in the 80's over the fire with relative humidity in the upper teens. On the western side of the fire near Soda Creek Point, the fire spotted across the fire line and fire crews were pulled off the lines in this area as a safety measure. Once it spotted across the line, the fire burned to the south and east toward, but not as far as, the 505 trail. It also burned actively in areas of heavy fuel concentrations on the north, south and east side of the fire. As a result of this renewed activity, acreage of the Meadow Fire increased to 6,600 acres. Two 20-person crews and a water tender continued to support the Nez Perce National Forest firefighters on the Baker Fire southwest of Elk City. Two new lightning holdover fires were reported and caught early by ground crews working with helicopter bucket drops.

The Incident Command Post for the Meadow Fire is located at Red River Ranger Station and the fire camp is located at York's field. Local residents are encouraged to reduce speeds due to increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Yesterday's Fire Activities

Sprinkler systems, hoses and pumps around residences in the area between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs were maintained. Crews and equipment continued to support structure protection efforts on the northwest side of the fire closest to private land by mopping up firelines and brushing out roads on the west/northwest corner of the fire. The fire backed through areas with heavy concentrations of fuel, torching single trees, groups of trees and making short uphill runs, resulting in spotting out ahead of the fire. Fire activity increased as it reacted to the lower afternoon humidity, resulting in the fire spotting across the lines on the west side of the fire. Unburned ground fuels and spotting remain as the primary carrier of the fire's progression. Short uphill runs occurred on ridges exposed to winds. Little downslope movement occurred. Firefighting resources, including engines and water tenders, continued to patrol and monitor the

northwest and west side of the fire to keep the fire from moving further downslope into Red River and to support structure protection activities. Fire activity increased along part of the fire perimeter on both the north and south sides. There have been no evacuations during this fire event.

Facilities protection remains in place at 14 Mile Trailhead, Granite Springs Campground and Green Mountain Lookout. The fire has burned to within several hundred yards of Granite Springs Campground, with new spot fires located immediately north of Granite Springs Campground and southwest of the campground in Fourmile Creek.

Today's Planned Events

Today's priority will continue to be firefighter and public safety. Primary emphasis will continue to be structure protection along Forest Road 234 between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs. Crews will continue with hazardous fuel reduction activities around residences and private land.

Crews will work to surround the spotting on the west side. The number one hazard continues to be snags and green trees with weakened root systems from fire damage.

Two 20-person crews and a water tender from the Meadow Fire have been temporarily assigned to the 27-acre Baker Fire located southwest of Elk City. They will continue with mop-up efforts there. The Lolo Hotshot crew has been temporarily assigned to the Heavens Gate Complex near Riggins, Idaho to assist with burnout operations.

Today's Weather Forecast and Fire Behavior

Weather has changed to a warmer, dryer pattern over the fire. Temperatures will rise to around 80 on the fire and relative humidity will drop back down into the teens, resulting in increased fire behavior, with activity picking up earlier than yesterday due to poor humidity recovery over the fire last night. Short and medium range spotting will probably occur today. The majority of the fire area is mostly uncontrolled fire perimeter made up of numerous spot fires. Ground vegetation under the tree canopy is still dry and will contribute to increased single and group tree torching. Tree regeneration in past harvest units and old burn areas from previous fires should still serve as effective barriers to fire spread in some areas under these conditions.

Maximum temperatures today will be 78-82 degrees in the fire area and near 90 at the Red River Ranger Station. Minimum relative humidity between 16-19 percent will contribute to active burning across the fire area.

Weather outlook for Wednesday is for temperatures to drop slightly with relative humidity in the low 20's in advance of the arrival of a cold front. Winds are expected to increase to 12-18 mph with stronger gusts from the south and southwest in the afternoon on Wednesday.

Area, Road and Trail Closures

For public safety, an area closure is currently in effect throughout the area surrounding the fire, including areas where the fire is most likely to spread as it becomes more active. Access to the forest is closed at the following locations: Forest Road 234 (except to local residents) and the Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) at the Red River Ranger Station to Poet Creek on the east side of the Magruder Corridor; and Black Hawk Mountain. The closure is not expected to be lifted until fire conditions improve. Visit the Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Center website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc> or www.inciweb.org for maps and other information about the closure.

Other Messages

Hunters in the area are reminded that fire activity will increase over the next few days as warmer, dryer weather quickly returns to the area. Be on the lookout for smoke from holdover lightning strikes from last week's storms that will start to show up, and report them as soon as possible. Hunters are also reminded to put all fires dead out, both camp fires and warming fires, so they don't contribute to the problem of additional fire starts. Hunters and other recreationists also need to be alert for dead trees that may fail, especially during windy periods. Fire crews and equipment are moving through the area and the public is asked to drive defensively as they travel through the Red River area.

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